

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Crookston • Duluth • Morris • Rochester • Twin Cities

*Office of the Dean
School of Public Health*

*A302 Mayo Memorial Building
Mayo Mail Code 197
420 Delaware Street S.E.
Minneapolis, MN 55455*

*Office: 612-624-6669
E-mail: sph-ask@umn.edu
Website: www.sph.umn.edu*

November 7, 2024

Dear Campus Committee on Student Behavior,

As the Associate Dean of Education and Student Engagement in the School of Public Health, I am writing to express my support for Professors Golberstein, Neprash, Carroll, and Huckfeldt. Specifically, I support the proposed remedy of dismissal from the doctoral program, if the Campus Committee on Student Behavior concludes that the preponderance of evidence indicates that Haishan Yang violated the express prohibition on using ChatGPT or other large language models during the HSRP&A doctoral preliminary exam.

Demonstration of ethical conduct and academic integrity are foundational to our educational programs and preparation of our students to become leaders in research and practice. In this time of increasing dissemination of misinformation and misuse of large language models to falsify data and documents, it is critically important that students are held to the highest ethical standards in their work. This type of serious misconduct has far-reaching consequences. The research community depends on the integrity of the work it builds on. At the University, we have witnessed the consequences of such falsification in terms of data that cannot be reproduced and publications that need to be retracted. Such ethical breaches damage the reputation of Institution.

The conclusion that a student was found to commit this type of serious academic misconduct, and then allowed to continue in the doctoral program, would call into question not only the integrity of their analyses, publications, future grant applications, but the integrity of our graduate programs.

Violation of the express prohibition on using ChatGPT or other large language models during the HSRP&A doctoral preliminary exam represents a serious failure of ethical conduct and warrants dismissal.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth V. Wattenberg, Ph.D.
Richard G. Bond Professor in Environmental Health
Associate Dean of Education and Student Engagement